

Please amend Claims 4, 11, 27 and 41 as follows:

4. (Amended) The method of Claim 2 wherein a modified oligonucleotide primer is included in said combination where said modified oligonucleotide primer is substantially identical to said oligonucleotide primer except for a chemical modification at its 3'-end that prevents degradation, by said 3' to 5' exonuclease, of said 1 to 10 nucleotides.

11. (Amended) The method of Claim 9 wherein a modified oligonucleotide primer is included in said combination wherein said modified oligonucleotide primer is identical to said first or said second primer except for a chemical modification at its 3'-end that prevents degradation by said 3' to 5' exonuclease, of said 1 to 10 nucleotides.

27. (Amended) The method of Claim 25 wherein a modified oligonucleotide primer is included in said combination wherein said modified oligonucleotide primer is identical to said one of said primers except for a chemical modification at its 3'-end that prevents degradation, by said 3'-5' exonuclease, of said 1 to 10 nucleotides.

41. (Amended) The method of Claim 39 wherein a modified oligonucleotide primer is identical to said oligonucleotide primer except for a chemical modification at its 3'-end that prevents degradation, by said 3'-5' exonuclease, of said 1 to 10 nucleotides.

#### REMARKS

The foregoing amendment and the following remarks are submitted in response to the Office Action of October 5, 2001. In this amendment, Applicants have canceled Claims 53-57,